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That hard it will be for us in any wise,
 Again them war or battle to underfong;
 Also our garrisons and fortress to maintain long
 Again their engines; without spiritual grace
 We can not perform in no manner case.

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NOTES ON DRAMATIC NOMENCLATURE IN GERMANY (1500-1700)

In our days when all dramas except operas and musical comedies are just plays, it is interesting to remember the painstaking attempts of former centuries to distinguish in the drama a multitude of minor types. When the classical formulas had been reintroduced by the Renaissance there were, of course, tragedy and comedy and soon also tragi-comedy, but before the ancient classifications had been universally accepted, and even for quite a time afterwards, certain terms were used of which the meaning is not often clear. Besides, even when tragedy, comedy and tragi-comedy covered nearly the whole of the dramatic field, a number of subspecies sprang up, developed and often disappeared without leaving more than the vaguest trace, perhaps not even a name, in the critical literature of the time. Or else there would be phantom species like the satyric drama which, long since disembodied, haunted modern poetics for centuries.

The following notes, jotted down in the course of a study on German dramaturgy, whilst disclaiming any attempt at completeness, may yet be found of some interest and may draw attention to certain problems of dramatic nomenclature which might repay a more exhaustive treatment.

A rapid glance into three successive centuries will serve to illustrate the changing outline and arrangement of the dramatic "map." Jodocus Badius, the printer and humanist, whose views, expressed in the *Prenotamenta* to his edition of Terence (1502, probably also 1500), may be taken as typical of the closing fifteenth century, counted amongst the species of the drama, "Omnes tragedie: omnes comedie: omnes mimi quedam egloge. Quidam dialogi & omnia in quibus autor non loquitur, sed solummodo persone per ipsum introducte." Distinguished by a keen sense of

the dramatic even in essentially undramatic work, this survey brings home the fact that, when it was made, the dramatic horizon of the so-called modern man still practically coincided with that of the ancient, if indeed it was not more restricted. To be sure Badius might have recognized certain forms of the medieval drama, which he knew and sometimes obviously had in mind; but he did not: a fact to be accepted and interpreted. The title-page of the second volume of Hans Sachs' collected works (1560) promises "Tragedi, Comedi, Spiel, Gesprech, Sprüch und Fabel"; the third volume contains "zuerst die geistlichen spiel, [zweitens] weltlich, alt Histori, aus den Poeten und geschicht schreiben . . ." the third "die Fasznacht spiel, mancherley art." There is no theory in this: it is merely a statement of contemporary fact, suggestive of a rather elaborate partition in the wide field of the drama, laid out into many small plots. Still a century later (1668), and we find the leader of a company of traveling actors in supplication to the town-council of Frankfurt, promising "etwas wunderwürdiges von einer neuen Invention so weder Tragödie, Comödie, Pastoral oder Histori, der Schatten genannt, welches bei allen Nationen der Welt niemals gesehen worden zum Besten geben."¹

Thus it is plain that the dramatic horizon has varied with the age, contracting or receding, spanning fields of diverse growth and cultivation. The survey of these offers some of the fascination of early maps, where towns are often pictured with houses and churches and outer walls, but great inviting stretches are labeled 'terra incognita.'

DIALOG-GESPRECH

One of the simplest forms of the drama is the dialogue; yet the simplicity of its technique seems to be equalled only by the complexity of its inner associations. It is not our task here to show by practical investigation its connection with the learned, philosophical disputation, the didactic pamphlet, the *Streitgedicht*, or to point out its occasional similarity to Shrovetide plays or its contamination by *Massendrama*.² Yet that is just what a theory

¹ E. Mentzel, *Geschichte d. Schauspielkunst in Fr. a. M.*, 1882, p. 98. Velten (Aug. 21, 1686) also mentions the "Poppenspiel und Schatten." *Ibid.*, p. 119.

² G. Niemann, *Die Dialogliteratur der Reformationszeit*, Leipzig, 1905, pp. 21, 43, etc.

of the dialogue, if such a theory existed, might reveal. As a matter of fact the meager information at hand fails to bring out any but two facts: first, that a dialogue is a poem, a conception derived by Hutten from Lucian's dialogues and accepted ever since; secondly, that its nature may be dramatic. A passage from the *Eckius Dedolatus* and Hutten's systematic use of the term *Gesprechbüchlin* for non-dramatic dialogues, go to establish the latter point. Johan Stammer's *Dyalogus* (1507) is also, he claims, "in modum comici dramatis formatus" and elsewhere termed "*dyalogum* sub comedie formule." The transition from dialogue to comedy, of which this is an instance, was easy, witness also the designation *Comedia oder Kampfgesprech*, often used by Sachs. Even if these comedies of Sachs were hardly worthy of the name, they were intended for comedies, as truly as Gnapheus' *Morosophus* (1540), or the anonymous *Lustspiel von der Weiber Reichstag*, both elaborated dialogues. By the end of the sixteenth century, however, the dialogue was disappearing, which is perhaps the reason why Wolfhart Spangenberg (born ca. 1570) was careful to insist that his *Singschul* (no date), although dramatic and divided between six Characters, was not a comedy, but merely "in gestalt einer Comödi, ohn abteilung der Acte, Spielweis, als ein Gespräch zwischen sechs Personen verfasst." There is probably some significance in the fact that where Stammer tried to show the similarity of his product with comedy, Spangenberg's chief concern attaches to the differences. Comedy, once the less-known quantity, seems now to have become the starting point.

GESPRÄCHSPIEL

What the dialogue had done for the enlightenment of the sixteenth century on its momentous religious problems, was undertaken in the following century, for the propagation of useful and polite learning, especially amongst women, by the so-called *Gesprächspiele*. Closely related to the dialogue—Harsdörfer claims Plato and Lucian, Vives and Erasmus as his predecessors—this interesting and too-little known product seems to bear a near relationship to the didactic pastoral. The *Spielstab* which is often alluded to, is a constant reminder of the restless versatility and polished garrulousness of shepherds and shepherdesses in more than one literature. What the immediate models were it would

be perhaps interesting to examine more fully. The species is common in Italy, says Harsdörfer. The *Senesische Spiele* of the *Accademia de gl'Intronati* seem to be his most direct prototypes. He also mentions other Italian *giuochi* of the sixteenth, and French *jeux de conversation* of the seventeenth century.³ But the nature and limits of Harsdörfer's *Frauenzimmer-gesprächspiele*, which appeared in Nürnberg in eight parts from 1641 to 1649, are nowhere theoretically defined, in spite of their importance for the intellectual life of the seventeenth century. Balthasar Schupp was right in observing that "der Sinnreiche und Arbeitsame Harsdörfer . . . mit seinem Spielen mehr ausgerichtet hab als ein ganz Regiment *Pedanten* und Schuelfüchs mit ihrem Arbeiten."⁴ Rist, although obviously imitating Harsdörfer in his *Aller-Edelste Belustigung* (1665 and after) did not even preserve the original name, which after Harsdörfer is very seldom found, although Georg Neumark's *Poetisches Gesprächspiel oder theatralische Vorstellung eines weisen und zugleich tapferen Regenten* (Weimar, 1662) might be adduced. Indeed, when Christian Weise hit upon the plan of providing some of the songs written by him in his student days with a setting of light dialogue, he was pleased to think that he had thus inaugurated a new fashion. As a matter of fact his *Andere Arth überflüssiger Gedancken* (1673) with its conversations between Gilanes (Weise), Melintes, Fillidor and occasionally a woman, is nothing but a series of *Gesprächspiele*.

AKTION

The nature of a *Gesprächspiel*, in spite of the infrequent use of the name, is definitely known, whilst in the case of the so-called *Aktion*, the name is frequent enough, but the precise nature of the product is hard to ascertain. Perhaps the term was applied in preference to religious plays, as in Greff's *Zacheus* . . . *Action auf das 18. und 19. Cap. Lucae* (1546), Ruff's *Adam und Heva* . . . *Aktion* (1550) and Clemens Stephanus' *Geistliche Action aus Ludovici Bero. Dialogo: wie man des Teuffels listen vnnd eingeben, Fürnemblich in Sterbens stundt vnd zeiten, entpflihen soll.* (1568). Or it may simply have expressed the meaning of *drama*, possibly *acted drama*.

³ Borinski, *Poetik der Renaissance*, p. 171.

⁴ *Freund in der Noht*, Schrifften, 1663, p. 263.

The Latin term *actio sacra* or *drama sacrum* was used for biblical dramas, e. g., for Joh. Entomius' *Zorobabel, Drama sacrum comicum* (1547), or Jac. Schöpfer's *Tentatus Abrahamus, actio sacra comice recens descripta* (1551). Such plays were also designated as either *tragoedia sacra* (Levinus Brechtus, *Euripus*, printed 1550) or *comoedia sacra* (Girbert, *Incunabula*, 1594) and later *christliche comoedia*, such as Geo. Mauricius' *Christliche Comoedia Von dem jämmerlichen Fall vnd frölichen Wiederbringung des Menschlichen Geschlechts* (1606). The vagueness of the term *actio* and its inherent need of further limitation is well illustrated by the play of the Jesuit Bernhard Mollerus, entitled *Vernalia Polycratis Regis Samii et VII. sapientium* (1598), which is described as *actio comica, heroica, sententiosa, peripatetica!*

SPIL

This seems to have been quite as comprehensive. It occurs indiscriminately for tragedy or comedy. Like *Aktion*, it may have chiefly conveyed the idea of *acted drama*, which would explain how Kirchmeier's *Tragedi Pammachius* becomes in Tyrolf's translation (1540) *Ein Christlich vnd gantz lustig Spiel!* and how Geo. Gotthart could write *Ein schön lustiges Spil oder Tragedi: Von der Zerstörung der . . . Statt Troja*. (1599). The *Homulus* was first *Ein schön Spyl* (Cölnn, 1584), afterwards *Ein sehr schöne Comedi* (Cölnn, 1582, etc.) and Dedekind's *Christliche Ritter* (1590) was *In ein geistlich Spiel oder Comedien gefasset*. The term was not restricted to religious subjects, witness Geo. Reypchius' *Ein schön neüw Spil / von den sibem Weysen ausz Griechenland* (1559) and the Tell-legend, made into *Ein hypsch spyl* (Zürich, s. a.). Hans Sachs seems to apply it only to plays in one act. The designation does not seem to occur in the seventeenth century, except in later editions of popular sixteenth-century dramas; thus the Bremen *Homulus* of 1665 is still *Eine Comödie oder Spiel*; or perhaps in some belated dramas of the older type, printed generally in the early seventeenth century, such as Joh. Strick's *Geistlich Spiel von dem . . . Falle Adams* (1602). Occasionally the sixteenth century has *Spiels-Übung*, e. g., *Aine geistliche Spiels-Übung die Zerstörung von Jericho vorstellend* (1579) which reminds one of the *progymnasta* of the early humanists.